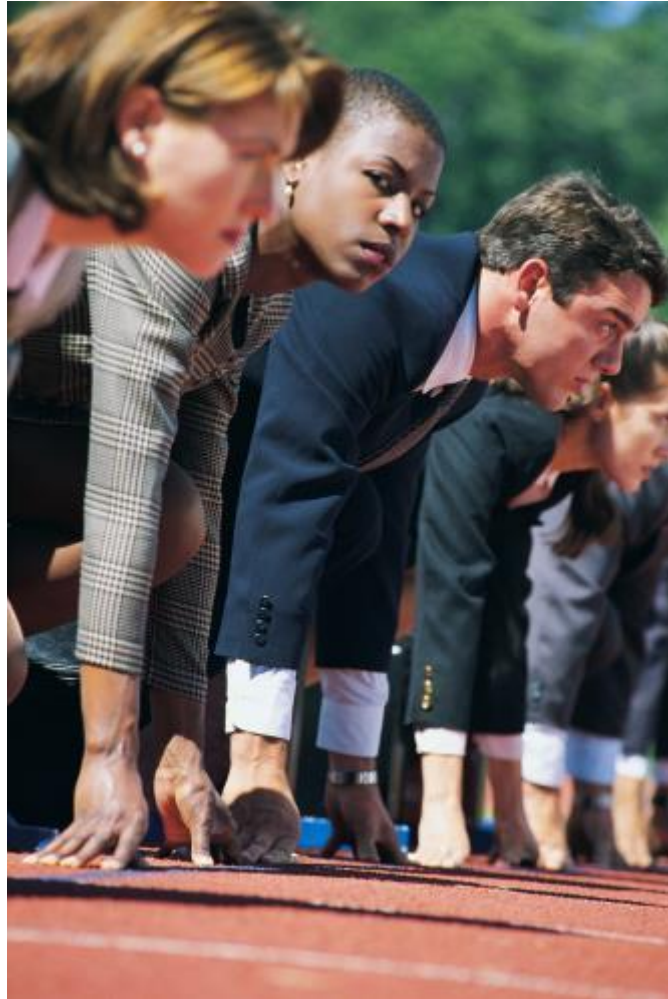

N.E.W. S.T.A.R.T.

8-week Wellness Challenge

*Toe the line for the **NEW START** Challenge!*



NEBRASKA
Good Life. Great Service.
DEPT. OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

well**NE**ssoptions

Purpose—to provide a framework of fun and friendly competition that will:

1. Promote awareness and healthier choices in all areas of wellness.
2. Encourage small steps that lead to big changes.
3. Create a supportive work environment.

Important Points:

- The following challenge is a supplementary resource available to State of Nebraska agencies. However, it is NOT an eligible program that qualifies for the Wellness Incentive.
- Participation in this challenge is to be done on personal time, and is in no way to be considered part of or arising out of employment for the purposes of workers' compensation or for any other purpose.
- Approval from appropriate Agency leadership should be obtained prior to launching this challenge.

Incentives or Prizes:

It is the sole responsibility of the group sponsoring the challenge to: 1) determine whether prizes or incentives will be offered and what form and 2) obtain Agency leadership approval. Incentive examples: casual dress days; end of challenge healthy potluck; certificates, etc.

Challenge Kit Contents:

Coordinator's Guide	pg. 2
Participant's Guide	pg. 4
E-mail Invitation	pg. 6
Challenge Registration Form	pg. 7
Challenge Emails/Newsletters	pg. 8
Post-Challenge Congratulations Email	pg.16
Participant Evaluation	pg.17
Weekly Tracking Logs	pg. 18
Challenge Promotional flyers/posters	pg. 19

N.E.W. S.T.A.R.T. Challenge: Coordinator's Guide

Challenge dates: The specific dates of the 8-week challenge can be determined by the individual agency or group, but will include a time span of 8 weeks.

Three weeks prior to start date:

- 1.) Determine criteria for “winning”: The goal of **NEW START** is to encourage participants to make a conscious and educated effort to achieve a healthier lifestyle. We want participants to be challenged in a different area each week to move toward a healthier lifestyle by incorporating one change each week so that at the end of the eight weeks, you’ve made eight small changes to form better habits. If you are giving prizes or incentives, you may choose to place the names of those that successfully complete the challenge in a raffle/drawing. If you are rewarding the entire group for participating, you may want to have a casual dress day (with supervisor approval) or a fun group activity.
- 2.) Establish Challenge Guidelines:
 - Will you make this an open competition, sharing results with all participants, or keep it anonymous and private?
 - Will you provide “extra points” for bonus activities? (i.e. – walking clubs, stretching breaks, adopting more than one change each week, etc.)
- 3.) Determine any support activities to be held during the course of the challenge (i.e. health education presentations, helpful tips, walking clubs, etc.) and schedule any necessary locations and support personnel.
- 4.) Advertise to employees: Use the provided email (page 6) and marketing flyer (page 19) to get the word out to as many participants as possible. Announce the challenge at staff meeting(s) and use word-of-mouth.

ONE week prior to start date:

- 1.) Copy and paste in an email the following as part of the email invitation for the **NEW START** challenge
 - Week 1: **N**utrition—choose ONE healthy addition/change/deletion to create a nutritional habit (i.e. water for soda, fruit for candy, whole grain for white bread, etc.)
 - Week 2: **E**xercise— choose ONE additional physical activity each day (20-30 min walk/jog, lift something heavy for 5 minutes, move for 3 minutes each hour, active errands, stretching, get outside, try a new exercise class—yoga, karate, kickboxing, TRX, weight-lifting, etc.)
 - Week 3: **W**ater--Log each morning you drink ONE full glass of water (8 oz or more) upon arising.
 - Week 4: **S**tress Resilience (unplug after work)—Log the activity & hours you unplugged each evening. Any activity that does not involve a screens (i.e. reading, exercising, crafting, uncluttering a closet, board games, etc.).

- Week 5: **T**eamwork—Log the volunteer activity of your choosing to do with your co-workers, family, friends, etc.)—will this be an on-going activity for you?
- Week 6: Self-**A**wareness—Self-awareness is an area that is often overlooked. The best way to learn more about yourself is through journaling. Pick ONE of these four areas to journal about all week: your **time**, your **spending**, your **feelings** or your **energy**.
- Week 7: **R**est—Log the number of hours of sleep each night—striving for at least 8 hours.
- Week 8: **T**raining—Learn something new—knitting, learn to play chess, take a class, try a new language or instrument, get certified in CPR, etc.)

- 2.) Email the provided Participant's Guide (page 4) to each participant.
- 3.) Send reminders (if necessary).
- 4.) Email each week (the provided emails/newsletters information about the weekly challenge) to all participants (page 8-15).

During the challenge:

- ✓ *Send weekly email newsletters and/or motivational messages (pages 8-15) to provide encouragement.*
- ✓ *If available, provide incentives to those participating in any supplemental activities.*
- ✓ *Offer healthy activities to complement the challenge. (Examples: groups walks, wellness education presentations, healthy lunches, service projects, etc.) Contact Rachelle Hadley, Wellness Specialist, at rachelle.hadley@nebraska.gov for other ideas and information.*

End date:

- ✓ *Determine who is eligible to receive prizes or incentives (if offered).*
- ✓ *Send post-challenge email (page 16) and provide participants with challenge evaluation form (page 17).*

Within a week of end date:

- ✓ *Collect and review challenge evaluation forms (page 17) and make notations for future planning.*
- ✓ *Communicate challenge outcomes to Rachelle Hadley, Wellness Specialist, (rachelle.hadley@nebraska.gov) for a potential story to promote your location accomplishments to improve the health of your employees.*

N.E.W. S.T.A.R.T.: Participant's Guide

Register:

Register with your challenge coordinator: [insert contact information] by [deadline].

Participate:

Even if you choose NOT to participate in the challenge, you are welcome to participate in any related educational activities.

- You will be provided an 8-week tracking log (where applicable) related to the weekly challenges. To complete the challenge, you must establish the behavior change for each week, building on the change from the week before (i.e. nutritional change in week 1 is added to the exercise change in week 2. In week 3, you add the water challenge, to the change made in week 2 and to the change made in week 1, etc.)
 - Week 1: **N**utrition—choose ONE healthy addition/change/deletion to create a nutritional habit (i.e. water for soda, fruit for candy, whole grain for white bread, etc.)
 - Week 2: **E**xercise— choose ONE additional physical activity each day (20-30 min walk/jog, lift something heavy for 5 minutes, move for 3 minutes each hour, active errands, stretching, get outside, try a new exercise class—yoga, karate, kickboxing, TRX, weight-lifting, etc.)
 - Week 3: **W**ater--Log each morning you drink ONE full glass of water (8 oz or more) upon arising.
 - Week 4: **S**tress Resilience (unplug after work)—Log the activity & hours you unplugged each evening. Any activity that does not involve a screens (i.e. reading, exercising, crafting, uncluttering a closet, board games, etc.).
 - Week 5: **T**eamwork—Log the volunteer activity of your choosing to do with your co-workers, family, friends, etc.)—will this be an on-going activity for you?
 - Week 6: Self-**A**wareness—Self-awareness is an area that is often overlooked. The best way to learn more about yourself is through journaling. Pick ONE of these four areas to journal about all week: your time, your spending, your feelings or your energy.
 - Week 7: **R**est—Log the number of hours of sleep each night—striving for at least 8 hours.
 - Week 8: **T**raining—Learn something new—knitting, learn to play chess, take a class, try a new language or instrument, get certified in CPR, etc.)

Throughout the challenge you will [Insert information about support activities planned such as e-mail message of encouragement, dates of recommended Health Education Presentations, and other special programs and incentives. Include any official support approved by Agency leadership.]

Criteria for “winning”:

- [Insert criteria as determined prior to program start]
- [If the contest includes prizes, CLEARLY list criteria for receiving prizes. List the name of the person who will announce and distribute the prizes.]

The **N.E.W. S.T.A.R.T.** challenge is a supplementary resource available to State of Nebraska agencies. However, it is NOT an eligible program that qualifies for enrollment into the wellness incentive.

Participation in this challenge is to be done on personal time, and is in no way to be considered part of or arising out of employment for the purposes of workers' compensation or for any other purpose.

EMAIL INVITATION



TOE the LINE with

**NEW
START**

Toe the line to a healthier you with **N.E.W. S.T.A.R.T.!** Take the challenge!

Are you wanting to begin a journey to a healthier lifestyle? Have you heard the statistic it only takes 21-days to form a habit? “Fact is, habits are hard to alter, and that’s why developing a good habit is really worth the struggle; once you’re used to making your bed each morning, or going for an evening walk, or flossing, you don’t have to exert much self-control to keep it up.”

(Gretchen Rubin, the happiness project, Oct, 2009)

Our newest wellness challenge, **N.E.W. S.T.A.R.T.** aims to provide the tools and support necessary for you to begin making a conscious and deliberate choice to create a healthier lifestyle. During this challenge, you’ll focus on adding small changes each week so by week 8, you have begun 8 new healthier habits worth continuing! You will:

- Receive emails/newsletters with tips and strategies to encourage you along the way
- Challenge yourself to focus on each week’s **new start**, along with the small change from the week before.
- Get motivated to live your best life!

Learn More!

Contact [insert name] at [insert phone and/or e-mail]

N.E.W. S.T.A.R.T Challenge Registration

TOE the LINE with

**NEW
START**



NAME	EMAIL
1.	
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WEEK 1-8 EMAILS/NEWSLETTERS

Toe the Line with

NEW START



WEEK 1: Nutrition—The first **NEW START** of eight!

To get started:

- Pick just one thing in your daily nutrition to change/add/delete— reduce soda or fast food, add fruit at lunch, no snacks after dinner, etc. Do you have that one thing in mind?
- Now, it's time for your **new start** by simply focusing on reducing that item in your daily nutrition. For instance, if you typically eat fast food every day for lunch, re-work that strategy by planning ahead and making/taking your lunch instead or aim for 2 or 3 days of the week to bring your lunch.
- Mark it down on your log each day this week.

The goal is to modify the unhealthy nutritional habit to the point that eventually you will have replaced it with something that is as easy as breathing and requires less intentional focus on your part. AND most of all you are on your journey to a **NEW START**!

CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK

Pick only ONE food/drink to change/add/delete this week!

Making too many changes all at once will set you up for failure. ONE simple thing is all you need to do this week.



TOOLS OF THE WEEK

Start with something that is realistic, be kind to yourself, if you fall off the proverbial wagon, start again the next day, choose something that is sustainable for the entire 8 weeks and find an accountabuddy.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK...

"Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going." — Jim Ryun

"Good habits are worth being fanatical about." — John Irving

"I am what I am today because of the choices I made yesterday," — Stephen R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*

"I should pursue only those habits that would make me feel freer and stronger."
— Gretchen Rubin, *Better Than Before: Mastering the Habits of Our Everyday Lives*



WEEK 2: Exercise—The second **NEW START** of eight!

This week:

- The goal is to do more activity starting this week than you have been doing. Again, choose **ONE** way to increase your physical activity.
- Log your physical activity each day (20-30 min walk/jog, lift something heavy for 5 minutes, move for 3 minutes each hour, active errands, stretching, get outside, try a new exercise class—yoga, karate, kickboxing, TRX, weight-lifting, etc.)

Week 2 will include your new physical activity **PLUS** your nutritional change from week 1 thus keeping you on your journey to a **NEW START!**

CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK

*Pick only **ONE** physical activity to add/change/delete!*

Log your activity each day this week along with your nutritional change from last week.



TOOL OF THE WEEK

Everything in life is about balance. The same holds true with exercise. On a regular basis, you should do something aerobic (activity that raises your heart rate), something that involves strength and/or resistance and something that increases flexibility and balance.

TIP FOR THE WEEK...

Staying active is one of the most important ingredients of a healthy life...You can be creative about fitting in your 30 minutes of activity a day. You can dance while you listen to the news, walk to the grocery store, or take a short walk after dinner. That's IT!

If you're unable to walk, you can still exercise. Try a chair exercise video, have someone help you with water aerobics in a pool, or play catch with someone from your chair. Throw in some strength training exercises to strengthen your bones and improve your balance, and you'll be well on your way to a healthy lifestyle.

Written by Annette McDermott Medically Reviewed by Peggy Pletcher, MS, RD, LD, CDE on December 19, 2016

WEEK 3: **W**ater—The third **NEW START** of eight!

Hydrate your body by:

- Consuming a full glass of water (8 oz. or more) first thing in the morning.
- This may require placing a glass on your nightstand, bathroom sink or making a special trip to the kitchen.
- Mark it down on your log each day this week.

A new health practice that many observe, drinking water is essential to hydrating your body first thing in the day after a night long fast. It helps wake you up and is an excellent way to flush out your body first thing to keep you regular, a key part of staying healthy. Remember, your body contains (and needs) more water than most of us realize. Be sure you're giving it enough, starting first thing — even before the coffee!

Remember to continue logging your new nutritional food/drink choice from week 1 along with your increased activity from week 2—your **NEW START** journey continues!

CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK

*Make drinking 1 full cup of water first thing in the morning the **NEW START** this week!*



Three weeks of **NEW START** include...

- 1) ONE healthy nutritional change/addition/deletion
- 2) ONE additional physical activity
- 3) One full glass of water each morning!

Keep up the AMAZING work!

WHY WATER...?

Your body uses water in all its cells, organs, and tissues to help regulate its temperature and maintain other bodily functions. Because your body loses water through breathing, sweating, and digestion, it's important to rehydrate by drinking fluids and eating foods that contain water.

WEEK 4: Stress Resilience—The fourth **NEW START** of eight!

This week strive for less screen time by:

- Ending all screen time (TV, pads, kindles, phones, etc.) 2 hours before you go to bed.
- You may have to work up to this by starting with all screens off 30 minutes before bed time, then an hour...working up to two hours before bedtime.
- Log the time each night you shut down all your screens. You might also take note on how you feel in the morning. Do you feel more rested?

Humans need to move their bodies, explore novel enriching environments, and bond with other humans face to face. Doing so maintains brain health as well as psychological and physical well-being...excessive screen time is making many of us: lazy, unhealthy, overweight, lonely, anxious, and depressed.

--Christopher Bergland, Psychology Today

Remember to continue logging your week 1, 2 and 3 **NEW START** changes—a true habit takes longer than 21 days. Keep up the great changes you are making in your life.

ARE YOU STILL...

- Are you continuing your food/drink **NEW START**?
- How about your increased physical activity?
- Remembering to drink ONE full glass of water each morning?



**A SOLID, POSITIVE
CHANGE TAKES
APPROXIMATELY SIXTY-
SIX DAYS—it may be less
or more depending on the
habit you are trying to
change.**

WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

According to the American Psychological Association, resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of **stress** — such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems or workplace and financial stressors. It means "**bouncing back**" from difficult experiences.

Computers, video games, and social media can be escapes for people who are dealing with stress mostly because of its convenience, but a more holistic, healthy approach to deal with stress is better sleep hygiene (establishing a good bedtime routine and adequate number of hours of sleep your body requires), better nutrition and exercise.

WEEK 5: Teamwork—The fifth **NEW START** of eight!

This week:

- Find a team (friends, family, co-workers) to do some volunteer work in your community.
- Contact a service agency to set up the date/time. Be sure the agency can handle the number of people in your group.
- Take a group picture and share it with your group and the agency AND with us!!
- Then decide if this is something you want to do together weekly, monthly, bi-monthly, etc.

We're meant to be giving, social creatures. In fact, being giving & social are important parts of long-term health & wellness. Even if you enjoy alone time, corresponding with others can relieve stress, enhance our mood, and even promote longevity. Additionally, doing something nice for others doesn't just benefit them but also you.



5 WEEKS IN...KEEP IT GOING...

By logging your **ONE** nutritional **NEW START**,

By logging your **ONE** additional **NEW START** physical activity,

By logging the **ONE** full glass of water you drink each morning,

By logging the **NUMBER** of hours before bedtime you quit screen time.



THE CHANGE IS REAL!

THE CHANGE IS SIGNIFICANT!

**YOU ARE CREATING A
NEW START TO HEALTHY
LIVING!**

The Quote for the Week...

"I choose to identify with the underprivileged.

I choose to identify with the poor.

I choose to give my life for the hungry.

I choose to live for and with those who find themselves seeing life as a long and desolate corridor with no exit signs. This is the way I'm going.

If it means suffering a little bit, I'm going that way.

If it means sacrificing, I'm going that way.

If it means dying for them, I'm going that way.

Because I heard the voice saying: do something for others." ~Martin Luther King Jr.

WEEK 6: self-Awareness—The sixth **NEW START** of eight!

This week, you are encouraged to become more **self-aware** by **journaling**. There are countless aspects of your life you can monitor, but there are four areas that will generate the highest quality of information to help you design your ideal lifestyle--your **time**, your **spending**, your **feelings** and your **energy**. Pick **ONE** of these four to journal about all week:

- Monitor a specific aspect of your life to provide you with a focus. (i.e. if you choose feelings, journal about positive and negative feelings, be curious about what causes those feelings).
- Choose a system to record your entries like a paper journal, a note on your phone, or an app that will make it easier for committing to your new writing habit. (i.e. Toggl.com for monitoring your time).
- Schedule a time of day when you will journal to reinforce the habit (the time of day doesn't matter, whatever works for you).
- If you choose to journal about how you spend your time, for instance, you may choose to break your day down into 30 minute segments or if you choose to journal about your energy—you may want to journal three times a day.

“If you want to make a big change in your life, you need to change your habits...A couple of years ago I interviewed 200+ people who got themselves unstuck and transformed their lives to include the work they've always wanted to do. I asked each of them, 'What was one key action you recommend to someone to get unstuck?'

Over half of them said writing a daily journal.”

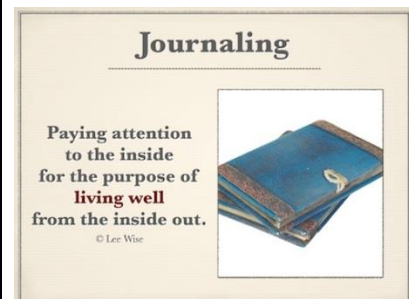
The #1 Self-Awareness Habit BY STEPHEN WARLEY

6 WEEKS IN...Are you making your **NEW START** practices a habit?

One definition of well-being includes 6 dimensions: Emotional, Intellectual, Occupational, Physical, Social and Spiritual. In these six weeks, what areas of your well-being have you improved?



As the late Jim Rohn once said, “A life worth living is a life worth recording.”



An interesting fact...

Keeping a daily diary has been a key habit of successful people throughout the ages. Some avid journalers include *Benjamin Franklin, George Sand, Thomas Edison, Virginia Wolfe, John D. Rockefeller, Oprah Winfrey, Louisa May Alcott, Bob Dylan, Dorothy Day, George Patton and Fergie*. One of the earliest known diaries comes from the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius.

WEEK 7: Rest--the seventh **NEW START** of eight!

Learn to LOVE to Sleep!

This week, the **NEW START** challenge is to:

- Log the number of hours of sleep you get each night.
- Log how you felt in the morning...were you still tired, do you feel rested and ready to go, did you hit the "snooze" button a few times?
- Work toward establishing the same time to go to bed each night and get at least 8 hours of sleep each night.

Why has sleep become something we have (and even hate) to work into our schedules? Sleep is a gift, something that's just as important as the food on our plate and our exercise habits. It's the time of the day that our body resets itself, detoxifies, and allows us to be able to conquer the next day ahead. Depression, weight gain, stress, and even food cravings can all occur when we don't get enough rest. For some of us, our sleep needs may be 8 hours, and others it could be 9 or 10. If you are getting the sleep you need, you will wake up at the same time each day without the need for an alarm clock.

If you are sticking to the **NEW START** challenge you are logging something about nutrition, exercise, water, screen time, may be volunteering on a regular basis, journaling about energy, feelings, spending or time and NOW sleep. Keep it going through at least ONE more week!

YOU are ONE week to the **FINISH LINE!**

- Have you formed a new positive habit?
- How will you sustain it as a part of your healthy lifestyle?
- Remember to rely on your accountabuddy!



FACT about **LACK of SLEEP**

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that fatigue is a cause in 100,000 auto crashes and 1,550 crash-related deaths a year in the U.S. The problem is greatest among people under 25 years old. Lack of sleep also affects sex life, memory, health, aging and ability to lose weight.



WEEK 8: Training--the eighth (and final) **NEW START!**

Training = specific goals of improving one's capability, capacity, productivity and performance.

For the **NEW START** challenge, use this week to try something new—get out of your comfort zone!

- Our schedules can turn us into creatures of habit. This can also make us bored, unhappy, and possibly lose our passion.
- Unlike the other **NEW START** changes in this challenge, this one is recommended once a month.
- This can be something as simple as trying a new cooking method, trying a new exercise, working in a different atmosphere, trying a new approach to something at your work, or even just shopping at a local farmer's market instead of a commercial grocery store.

RESOURCES:

- Youtube along with the internet in general, is a great place to learn a new hobby— from plumbing to auto mechanics to knitting—you name it you can probably find it. Make sure you have the proper tools and the proper safety in place when trying anything new.
- Contact your local gyms to try a new exercise class—almost of them have a free class/trial period.
- Pinterest is also a mecca of great ideas for new  projects.
- Contact your local merchants or libraries for clubs or groups to join i.e. running, knitting, scrapbooking, language round-tables, etc.

The **BENEFITS** you will gain from #8:

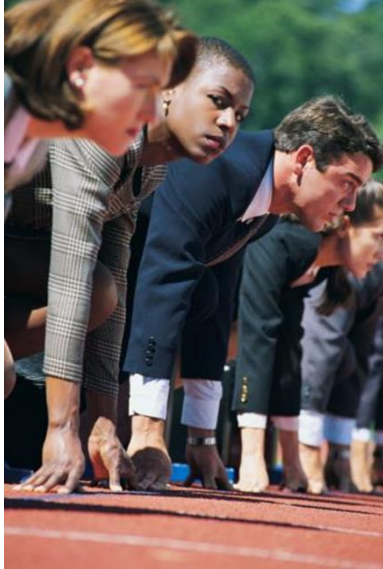
- 1) Trying something new often requires **courage**.
- 2) Trying something new opens up the possibility for you to **enjoy** something new.
- 3) Trying something new keeps you from becoming bored.
- 4) Trying something new forces you to **grow!**

Alex Lickerman, M.D.. Psychology Today



Post-Challenge Congratulations Email

START HERE...to keep the momentum going!



Congratulations on completing the **N.E.W. S.T.A.R.T.** Challenge! We appreciate your participation in the challenge and commitment to a healthier lifestyle. Use the tips and tools you learned during the challenge to propel yourself into new habits, set new goals and work towards a healthier version of you!

[Insert contest results/winners details if determined]

Please complete the attached evaluation and return to [insert email] by [insert date].

Watch for more challenges and offerings coming soon! We look forward to your continued participation.

Sincerely,

[Insert name of Wellness Champion/Advocate]

Post-Challenge Evaluation



N.E.W. S.T.A.R.T.

8-week Wellness Challenge

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement as it relates to your experience with the **NEW START** Challenge.

Rating: 5=strongly agree 4=agree 3=neutral 2=disagree 1=strongly disagree

1. The challenge was a motivating way to create a healthier lifestyle.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
2. The challenge provided relevant information and tips to help me maintain my health.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
3. The challenge was engaging and well delivered.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
4. As a result of participating in the challenge, I made at least one healthy behavior change.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
5. Overall I am satisfied with my experience with the NEW START challenge.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

6. Comments: